

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 COPENH 00931 031337Z

61

ACTION EA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 670

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USDEL JEC PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L COPENHAGEN 0931

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, DA

SUBJECT: DANISH ATTITUDE TOWARD THE PRG

REF: STATE 071664 AND COPENHAGEN 0829

SUMMARY: THE DANISH GOVERNMENT IS "VERY CONCERNED" ABOUT THE SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM, PARTICULARLY ABOUT THE REFUGEE PROBLEMS. FONMIN ANDERSEN MAINTAINED THAT HIS CONCESSIONS TO THE PRG WERE ONLY MINOR IN NATURE AND THAT THERE WOULD BE NO UPGRADING OF THE STATUS OF THE PRG INFORMATION OFFICE IN COPENHAGEN. THE DANES HAVE ASKED VARIOUS RELIEF ORGANIZATIONS HOW THEY CAN BE HELPFUL IN REGARD TO REFUGEES. CONSIDERATION OF A MAJOR AID LOAN TO NORTH VIETNAM IS TO BE POSTPONED. THE DANES ARE CONSULTING CLOSELY WITH THEIR NORDIC PARTNERS AS TO FUTURE MOVES IN VIETNAM. END SUMMARY.

1. ARMED WITH THE DEPARTMENT'S INSTRUCTIONS AND THE
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PAGE 02 COPENH 00931 031337Z

HELPFUL POINTS PROVIDED BY EMBASSY SAIGON (SAIGON 3450),

I CALLED ON FOREIGN MINISTER KB. ANDERSEN APRIL 2 AND TOLD HIM THAT WE FELT STRONGLY THAT THIS WAS NOT THE TIME TO TAKE ANY STEPS TO ENHANCE THE PRESTIGE OF THE PRG. IT WAS NOW CLEAR THAT THEY WERE GUILTY OF NAKED AGGRESSION. THE VERY FACT THAT THE REFUGEES WERE TRYING TO FLEE FROM COMMUNIST CONTROL INDICATED WHO REALLY WAS ACCEPTED AS THE LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT IN SOUTH VIETNAM. THEIR ABUSE OF THE PARIS AGREEMENTS WAS DISGRACEFUL. IN SHORT, WE DID NOT FEEL THAT THEY DESERVED ANY HELP WHATSOEVER.

2. IN RESPONSE, THE FOREIGN MINISTER SAID THAT HE COULD ASSURE ME THAT THE DANISH GOVERNMENT WAS "VERY CONCERNED" ABOUT THE SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM, PARTICULARLY ABOUT THE REFUGEE PROBLEM. HE ADDED THAT THE CONCESSIONS TO THE PRG HE ANNOUNCED LAST MONTH WERE "NOT SO VERY MUCH", AND HAD, IN ANY CASE, BEEN DECIDED BEFORE THE PRESENT OFFENSIVE. IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN DANISH POLICY, HE CONTINUED, TO TRY TO BALANCE ASSISTANCE IN VIETNAM. THEY WANTED TO BE ABLE TO GIVE AS MUCH TO THE NORTH AS TO THE SOUTH WITH ONLY A SMALL AMOUNT GOING TO THE PRG, ALTHOUGH THE PRG HAD NOW GREATLY EXTENDED ITS AREA OF CONTROL. THE DANES CANNOT CHANGE THE STATUS OF THE PRG INFORMATION OFFICE IN COPENHAGEN BECAUSE THEY CONTINUE TO RECOGNIZE THAT THE GVN IS THE LEGITIMATE AUTHORITY IN SAIGON. I INTERRUPTED TO SAY THAT IF THERE WERE ANY UPGRADING OF THE PRG STATUS HERE, IT WOULD CERTAINLY BE CONSIDERED AS A FORM OF "REWARDING AGGRESSION". ANDERSEN POINTED OUT THAT IN HIS STATEMENT IN SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSIONS IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY, IT HAD BEEN MADE CLEAR TO THE PRG REPS THAT THE DANISH GOVERNMENT WOULD WELCOME A DISCUSSION OF HUMANITARIAN PROBLEMS. THEY HAD ALSO BEEN TOLD THAT THEY COULD NOW CONTACT THE MINISTRY'S POLITICAL DEPARTMENT, WHICH HAD BEEN OFF-LIMITS TO THEM IN THE PAST.

3. THE FOREIGN MINISTER THEN TURNED TO THE SUBJECT OF THE REFUGEES WHICH HE SAID HAS BEEN UNDER INTENSE STUDY HERE. THE DANISH GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN IN TOUCH WITH UN AUTHORITIES IN BOTH NEW YORK AND GENEVA AND, I GATHERED, ALSO WITH SUCH OTHER GROUPS AS THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES. THE RESPONSE THEY GOT WAS THAT THERE ARE NO CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 COPENH 00931 031337Z

CONCRETE PROJECTS YET WITH REGARD TO REFUGEE ASSISTANCE IN SOUTH VIETNAM, BUT THAT THE DANES WILL BE INFORMED THE MOMENT SOMETHING IS SET UP. ANDERSEN STRESSED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD FIND THE MONEY, BECAUSE IT VERY MUCH WANTS TO HELP. HE HIMSELF HAS A SMALL SECRET "CATASTROPHE FUND" WHICH HE WOULD BE WILLING TO TAP, BUT HE THINKS LARGER SUMS MAY BE NEEDED AND HE WILL NOT HESITATE TO GO IMMEDIATELY TO THE PARLIAMENTARY FINANCE COMMITTEE TO GET MONEY. THERE

WILL BE NO PROBLEM WITH THAT COMMITTEE ON THE REFUGEE SUBJECT, HE ASSERTED.

4. ON THE MORE GENERAL SUBJECT OF AID, ANDERSEN EXPLAINED THAT, AFTER THE PARIS AGREEMENTS, WHEN HE HAD BEEN FOREIGN MINISTER IN A PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT, IT HAD BEEN DECIDED THAT DANISH ASSISTANCE TO VIETNAM WOULD BE DIVIDED BETWEEN THE GVN AND THE DRVN. AT THAT TIME THE NORTH VIETNAMESE HAD INDICATED THAT THEY WANTED DANISH FINANCING FOR A LARGE HOUSING PROJECT, COSTING MORE MONEY THAN THE DANES HAD AVAILABLE FOR THEM IN ANY ONE YEAR. IN FACT, THIS PROJECT WOULD USE UP THREE YEARS OF AID MONEY. BY IRONIC COINCIDENCE, ANDERSEN SAID, THE REQUEST FOR THE 150 MILLION DANISH KRONER (\$27,275,000) WAS JUST NOW ABOUT TO COME TO THE FINANCE COMMITTEE FOR APPROVAL. HE SAID THIS WOULD MATCH THE 90 MILLION KRONER ALREADY GIVEN TO THE GVN AND THE 60 MILLION PROMISED THEM. (THESE APPARENTLY ARE ROUGH FIGURES AND DO NOT MATCH PREVIOUS FIGURES WE WERE GIVEN. SEPTTEL ON DANISH AID TO VIETNAM FOLLOWS.) ANDERSEN HIMSELF REALIZED THAT THE TIMING OF THIS REQUEST FOR AID MONEY FOR NORTH VIETNAM WAS VERY POOR, AND HE IS GOING TO POSTPONE FINANCE COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION FOR AT LEAST SEVERAL WEEKS. HE WILL TELL THE NORTH VIETNAMESE WHY THIS IS BEING DONE.

5. I SAID THAT WE WERE OF COURSE INTERESTED IN WHAT THE DANISH GOVERNMENT WAS DOING VIS-A-VIS NORTH VIETNAM BUT OUR REAL CONCERN AT PRESENT WAS IN ANY STEPS TO INCREASE THE STANDING OF THE PRG. THAT ORGANIZATION WAS ONLY A FRONT AND HAD NONE OF THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOVERNMENT. ANDERSEN SAID THAT THERE WERE "PEOPLE WITH THE OPPOSITE VIEW" WHO ASKED WHICH AUTHORITY CONTROLS MOST OF SOUTH VIETNAM, AND ADDED THAT THE GVN ITSELF WAS NOT ENTIRELY FREE OF FAULT IN CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 COPENH 00931 031337Z

REGARD TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PARIS AGREEMENTS. I REPLIED THAT I DID NOT WISH TO ARGUE THIS POINT WITH HIM BUT I WOULD MERELY POINT OUT THAT IT WAS NOT THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE WHO WERE AT THIS MOMENT UNDERTAKING AN OFFENSIVE AGAINST THE NORTH.

6. THE FOREIGN MINISTER CONCLUDED THIS PART OF THE CONVERSATION BY SAYING THAT THE DANES WOULD HAVE TO WAIT AND SEE WHETHER THE PRG WOULD BE ABLE TO ESTABLISH A MORE REGULAR FORM OF GOVERNMENT. HE EMPHASIZED ONCE MORE THAT THE DANES ARE "VERY UPSET AND CONCERNED" ABOUT THE SITUATION AND ARE CONSULTING THEIR NORDIC PARTNERS AS TO FUTURE ACTION. HE NOTED THAT THEY WERE COORDINATING MOST CLOSELY WITH NORWAY, AND WOULD PROBABLY NOT "TAKE THE SAME CHANNEL" AS THE SWEDES INsofar AS GETTING INFORMATION IS CONCERNED.

7. COMMENT: I REGRET THAT I CANNOT REPORT THAT I CHANGED THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S VIEWS ON THE SITUATION IN VIETNAM. I DO THINK IT IS IMPORTANT, HOWEVER, THAT THIS DEMARCHE WAS MADE BECAUSE HE MUST BE MADE TO REALIZE HOW SERIOUSLY WE TAKE THE VIOLATION OF THE PARIS AGREEMENTS AND ANYTHING WHICH DENMARK MIGHT DO TO ENCOURAGE THE PRG. ON THE BRIGHTER SIDE, I THINK THE DANES WANT TO BE AND WILL BE VERY HELPFUL IN PROVIDING ASSISTANCE FOR REFUGEES. THEY HAVE A LONG TRADITION IN THIS REGARD AND WILL PROBABLY BE AMONG THE MORE GENEROUS DONORS.

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